

GRAPHIC MATERIAL

03.08–03.09.10

UTS GALLERY





JÜRGEN LEHNI
COLLIDER
JEREMY WOOD
TOKO
GRAPHIC THOUGHT FACILITY
FROST* DESIGN
POSTSPECTACULAR
BERT SIMONS
MARK GOWING
SABRINA RAAF
AARON SEYMOUR
IAN STEVENSON
TRIGGER

HOW ARE NEW TECHNOLOGIES
TRANSFORMING GRAPHIC DESIGN?
FREED FROM THE CONSTRAINTS
OF INK ON PAPER, LEADING
LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL
PRACTITIONERS RESPOND —
BLURRING THE FIELDS OF
DESIGN, ART AND TECHNOLOGY.

Design disciplines are often thought of in terms of their material output: architects make buildings, industrial designers products, fashion designers clothes. For visual communicators this pairing is seen to be with two-dimensional print and screen. New directions in practice, motivated in part by new production technologies, are challenging this assumption.

Partly this is driven by the increasing affordability of once-specialised technologies such as rapid-prototyping, laser cutting and integrated micro-controllers. Through the democratising of information facilitated by the internet, the curious graphic designer now has access to once specialised fabrication processes.

The last half-decades' resurgent interest in craft is also leading many designers to move from their computers to more physical methods of shaping their design concepts.

Combined, these various factors are leading to increasingly multidisciplinary design practices, dissolving the traditional boundaries between the graphic, industrial and architectural. Practitioners are utilising these new tools — as well as the conceptual reappraisal they encourage — to explore the material and sculptural boundaries of their disciplines.

Untethered from specific media, visual communication is reinstating itself as a mode of inquiry. This exhibition aims to explore what visual communication might mean, and how this might be evidenced, when thought of outside conventional notions of ink on paper.

CRASH: HOMAGE
TO JG BALLARD
POSTER AND CATALOGUE
GRAPHIC THOUGHT
FACILITY

Like much of Graphic Thought Facility's work, these posters utilise industrial fabrication techniques to explore the material possibilities of graphic design. Designed for the Gagosian Gallery's **CRASH: Homage to JG Ballard** exhibition, the posters' graphics were printed onto the top of several layers of PVC sheet. These layers were then high-frequency welded to enclose a central foam core. The resulting vertical seams suggest vinyl car seats of the 1970s, evoking the automotive and sexual motifs so central to Ballard's novel of the same title.

GTF is a London-based design consultancy headed by Creative Directors Huw Morgan, Paul Neale and Andrew Stevens:
graphicthoughtfacility.com

HOPSCOTCH NEON
MARK GOWING

Mark Gowing's work is characterised by a fascination with geometric typography. His work frequently features custom designed typefaces generated through the repetition of modular abstract forms. Although most of his studio's output is print-based, Gowing frequently produces physical sculptures and scenarios that are then photographed. This neon logotype was created for use in the cinema trailer of film distribution company Hopscotch.

Mark Gowing is the director of Mark Gowing Design:
markgowing.com

MERIDIANS
JEREMY WOOD

Meridians is one of an ongoing series of GPS drawings by British artist Jeremy Wood. A kind of 21st century land art, Wood draws upon the landscape by mapping global positioning coordinates to high-resolution satellite imagery.

The text, taken from Melville's **Moby Dick**, was written over a period of three months from January 2005. The length of the line recorded on foot for the drawing was 44.2 miles, and the total distance traveled to make the drawing was 458.6 miles. Wood had two bicycle punctures with reinforced puncture resistant tires, the first of which happened 20 miles into a journey looking for locations that ended in having to push the bike home for 9 miles. After closing the body of the last letter, he headed as far north as the land allowed to a small pier on which the Greenwich Meridian is marked, and finished the drawing by circling around on the footpath at the edge of the River Thames for a full stop.

Jeremy Wood is a multidiscipline artist and map maker whose diverse work is an expression of the poetry and politics of space and a reflection upon how we treat our travels and interact with location:
gpsdrawing.com

TRANSLATOR II: GROWER
SABRINA RAAF

Translator II: Grower is a small 'rover' vehicle which navigates around the periphery of a room. It senses the room's carbond dioxide (CO2) levels and responds by drawing varying heights of 'grass' on the walls in green ink. The number of people in an exhibit space breathing in oxygen and exhaling CO2 has an immediate effect on the sensor. This level is read every few seconds and translated into a green line on the wall – the higher the line, the greater the higher the concentration of CO2 (and therefore also the number of people in the space).

Once **Grower** completes a line, it moves forward several millimeters and repeats the process. By the end of an exhibition, the bases of all the walls in the space are covered with fine green lines which together resemble a cross-section of a field of grass. Metaphorically, grass needs CO2 in nature to grow. Here, the simulated grass needs the breath of human visitors in order to thrive.

Sabrina Raaf is a Chicago-based artist working in experimental sculptural media and photography and is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago:
raaf.org

POKE
VINCE FROST,
FROST* DESIGN

An exploration of dimensional typography, **Poke** aims to express the dramatic potential of the title's semantic meaning and plosive spoken sound. Frost says of the work "Our 3D expression of the word is meant to awaken the type into existence beyond the flat page. The word grows and spikes the senses crying out 'Look at me. Look at me.'"

Vince Frost is Chairman and Creative Director of Frost* Design:
frostdesign.com.au

SNAKE EGG

CABAL – TIM'S LOGBOOK
ANDREW VAN DER
WESTHUYZEN,
COLLIDER

Cabal is an ongoing personal project created by Andrew van der Westhuyzen of Collider. Centred around a dystopian science-fiction narrative it constitutes a collection of works that draw upon the idea that humans will one day be replaced by the machines they have created. Andrew created both the **Snake Egg** sculpture and the slipcase for **Tim's Logbook** using rapid prototyping. This technology slices then 'prints' a 3D digital file layer by layer to gradually build up a solid model.

Andrew is the director and cofounder of Sydney-based design and film collective Collider;
collider.com.au

TYPE AND FORM KARSTEN SCHMIDT, POSTSPECTACULAR

Initially created for the cover of **Print** magazine, this rapid-prototyped model was ‘grown’ using generative code written by Schmidt. Based on the Gray-Scott reaction diffusion model used in chemistry the emergent behaviour of this code was used to bring forth the model. A typographic mask was used to delimit the reaction’s growth as can be seen in the accompanying video. The resulting frames of the animation were then stacked in 3D space to create the final rapid-prototyped model. As well as being typographically legible the sculpture can also be read as an animation. Its form maps the output of the Schmidt’s code through time, from its initial stages (rear) to final iteration (front).

PostSpectacular is the design studio of Karsten Schmidt (aka toxi), a London-based computational designer merging code, design, art and craft skills: postspectacular.com

BURNT LAKES AARON SEYMOUR

Burnt Lakes is a meditation on the effects of climate change on the Australian landscape. A computer generated model of each lake was sliced approximately 50 times. Each slice was then individually cut through a single sheet of paper by a laser cutter set to its maximum power output.

Aaron Seymour is a designer, filmmaker, and Senior Lecturer in Visual Communications at the University of Western Sydney: aaronseymour.com

SHEET MUSIC AARON SEYMOUR & IAN STEVENSON

Sheet Music explores the potential of electrically conductive inks to transform a piece of graphic design into an electronic component. Printed with silver ink these two posters work as aerials picking up variations in the room’s electromagnetic field caused by gallery visitors. Electronics enclosed in the wall convert these variations to sound, allowing participants to ‘play’ the posters by moving their hands in front of them.

Ian Stevenson is an artist, engineer, sound designer and coordinator of the Sound Technologies program in the School of Communication Arts at University of Western Sydney.

HEKTOR DRAWINGS MATERIALS: GLASS. STONE. BRICK. INSULATION JÜRIG LEHNI

These four drawings are by **Hektor**, a portable Spray-paint Output Device for laptop computers. Its light and fragile installation consists of only two motors, toothed belts and a can holder that handles regular spray cans. The can is moved along drawing paths just as the human hand would. During operation, the mechanism sometimes trembles and wobbles, and the paint often drips. The contrasts between these low-tech aspects and its high-tech construction hold ambiguous and poetic qualities and make Hektor enjoyable to watch in action.

Hektor was created with a certain attitude towards design and the use of tools. Intuition played an important role in the search for a new output device that goes beyond the limitations of today’s clean computer, screen and vector-graphic based design and conveys the abstract geometries contained in these graphics in a different way than normal printers do.

Hektor’s software is based on Scriptographer, a scripting plugin for Adobe Illustrator created by Jürg Lehni and made freely available: Scriptographer gives the user the possibility to extend Illustrator’s functionality by the use of the JavaScript language. It puts the tool back into the hand of the user and brings the philosophy of open source to a closed product.

Working collaboratively across different fields, Jürg Lehni’s work often deals with the notion of tools, the potential of industrial processes and human adaptation to technology: scratchdisk.com

HEKTOR JÜRIG LEHNI & ULI FRANKE

RITA
JÜRIG LEHNI
WITH SUPPORT OF: DEFEKT GMBH, SITEMAPPING, FESTO SE & PRO HELVETIA

This video documents Lehni’s drawing machines, **Hektor** and **Rita**. **Rita** is a recording and playback device for drawings, capable of reproducing line drawings and erasing them again. **Rita** instrumentalises the process of drawing and facilitates play with its narrative qualities. It is a machine that constantly reproduces drawing processes but never really produces anything, as its results are impermanent. The main focus is on the moment of the creation and the simulation of the dynamics and ordering of the drawing rather than the finished form. **Rita** turns the personal drawing into something reproduceable. This tension between the personal and simulation holds ambiguous qualities. The drawing becomes something more abstract, a sequence of movements and forms.

EXPERIMENT
GREGORY
ANDERSON,
TRIGGER

Experiment allows participants to interact with a series of projected images to create their own animation. Participants attach a round disk to their wrist which captures a small sequence from the 151 projected images. As they move throughout the space different image sequences are viewed. This creates an animation through the movements of the human body. **Experiment** explores how people can create unique experiences within the same parameters and how their individual movements can render a distinct and unconscious 'dance'.

Gregory Anderson is the director of Sydney design studio Trigger: triggerdesign.com.au

PAPER PORTRAIT OF
MR IVO OPSTELTEN
BERT SIMONS

Paper Portrait Of Mr Ivo Opstelten is the most recent in a series of remarkable 'paper portraits' by Dutch artist Bert Simons. Simons' first work of this kind was a self-portrait. He developed the technique out of a desire to clone himself - his creative response to the early onset of a mid-life crisis. His method involves scanning his subjects using a hacked laser from a low-cost circular saw. Using this data as a starting point he builds a 3D computer model of their heads which is then mapped with numerous digital photographs. Simons spent over 250 hours building this portrait of Mr Ivo Opstelten, the Mayor of Rotterdam, from 1999-2008.

Bert Simons is a designer based in Rotterdam: www.bertsimons.nl

MAKING A POINT:
WEALTH VERSUS HAPPINESS
INFOGRAPHITI

INFOGRAPHITI RUG:
ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT
TOKO

Infographiti is an ongoing personal project of Toko's which explores the aesthetic potential of data visualisation. The **Wealth versus Happiness Infographiti** visualizes and contradicts the common understanding that money equals fulfilment. Each of the nine canvasses compares a single country's unpredictable balance between wealth (the impressions in canvas) and happiness (the acrylic).

Handmade in Thailand, this recently produced rug extends the **Infographiti** project into new material territory. Its bold, data-generated graphic visualises the ecological footprint (gha's/person) of six geographic regions.

Formerly based in Rotterdam, now Sydney, the Toko design studio is directed by Eva Dijkstra and Michael Lugmayr: toko.nu



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UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

Curated by
Aaron Seymour

FREE PUBLIC EVENTS

Panel Discussion

Wednesday 4 August

2-4pm

Poetic Machines:
the interaction between
tools and creative practice

Curator's Floortalk

Tuesday 10 August

1-2pm

WWW.GRAPHIC-MATERIAL.COM

UTS Gallery

Senior Curator

Tania Creighton

Assistant Curator

Holly Williams

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Image: Bert Simons **Paper portrait of Mr. Ivo Opstelten** 2008, paper. Courtesy the artist.

UTS:GALLERY

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www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au

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